



JOINT MESSAGE FROM  
THE ALL-OHIO STATE FAIR BAND AND ALL-OHIO STATE FAIR YOUTH CHOIR

May 21, 2020

Dear Members, Parents, Guardians, Educators, Alumni and Friends,

It is with the mixed feelings of both heaviness and hope that we send this message to each of you. As you have probably heard, the Ohio Expositions Commission announced today that the 2020 Ohio State Fair has been canceled. While one of our greatest joys is being on the Fairgrounds each summer with amazing youth from across Ohio making music and memories together, we fully support this decision, as it is in the best interest of the health and safety of our youth, our staff and the general public.

The Ohio Expositions Commission has released the following statement:

*Today, the Ohio Expositions Commission announced that it will cancel the 2020 Ohio State Fair, originally scheduled for July 29 – August 9 in Columbus. Members of the Commission expressed concern for public health, as well as the financial feasibility of hosting a socially distant fair that would adhere to social distancing protocols and its impact on the long-term viability of the Ohio State Fair.*

*“After careful thought and deliberation, we have decided to cancel the Ohio State Fair. Knowing how easily the virus spreads in large groups, we believe it is the safest path forward for the health and safety of all Ohioans.” said Andy Doehrel, chair of the Ohio Expositions Commission. “The financial ramifications of hosting a reduced-capacity Fair would be too great, and we need to protect the great Ohio State Fair for future generations.”*

*“Our first priority is the safety of the hundreds of thousands of people involved in the Ohio State Fair each year. While this is a difficult decision, we feel it is necessary to protect the fairgoers, exhibitors, volunteers, vendors, partners, performers, concessionaires, youth leaders, employees and sponsors,” said Virgil Strickler, general manager of the Ohio Expo Center & State Fair. “I look forward to seeing my fellow Ohioans at the 2021 Ohio State Fair, when it is safer for us to enjoy our favorite traditions together.”*

*Last year, 934,925 people attended the Ohio State Fair during its 12-day run. These attendees came from each of Ohio's 88 counties, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, as well as Canada and Mexico.*

*The Ohio Expositions Commission is focused on developing a strategy to responsibly reopen its year-round facilities when appropriate, and to welcome guests back for the 2021 Ohio State Fair, scheduled for July 28 through August 8 of next year.*

Even though our hearts are heavy with this news, we remain strong in the hope that the All-Ohio State Fair Band and All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir will continue living in their rich histories, even in 2020 – though from a distance. By Monday, June 15, we plan to follow up with each of you regarding plans for virtual Choir and Band activities that will take place yet this summer – including distance recording projects, live Zoom events and more. To assist us in our planning, you will be receiving an online survey over the weekend that will help us learn about the types of activities and events that will be meaningful for you this summer. Please check your email and respond to the survey by Monday, June 1.

We are certain that you will have many questions, and we will be working tirelessly to find answers to them all. Please check our respective social media pages and web sites for updated information in between email correspondences. As mentioned above, you can expect the next email update to be sent by June 15. In the meantime, we have provided answers to some questions you may already have below:

***What does this mean about my status with the AOSFB or AOSFYC?***

Each member accepted into each of our organizations this year is officially a member of the 2020 edition! All will be considered alumni, as they have earned their spot in this year's ensemble. Digital certificates will be sent to each member at the end of our 2020 virtual activities.

***What about four-year members? Will they be recognized?***

Yes! If this is your fourth year in the AOSFYC or AOSFB, we will recognize and honor you as such. Stay tuned for details.

***I have already paid for registration, uniforms, etc. Will I receive a refund?***

Yes, anyone that has paid for 2020 registration or any other 2020 items will receive a 100% refund by Friday, May 22 to the same payment method used when ordering. Please know that, depending upon your bank, refunds may take up to 9-14 business days to process. This applies primarily to 2020 members of the All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir, as the Band has not yet accepted payments this year.

***Will I be able to see my friends and choir/band family this year?***

While we are unable to announce any firm plans at this time, it is our hope to organize an event for AOSFB and AOSFYC members to gather at a later time for fellowship and, perhaps, a little music-making. Any such event, should it be able to occur, will be

announced in advance by email and will strictly and appropriately follow guidelines from the State of Ohio, the CDC and local health departments. Likewise, both organizations will work with their alumni representatives to appropriately plan for future alumni gatherings.

***I have already submitted my membership agreement, health certificate, etc. What will be done with that information?***

All paperwork that has already been submitted will be destroyed and will not be saved by our organizations. Stay tuned, as additional releases may be required for participation in our online activities and virtual performances.

We thank you for your support of our organizations, our communities and our state. We are #OhioStrong! Please join us in thanking the Ohio Expositions Commission and the team at the Ohio State Fair for their fearless leadership during this trying time. We look forward to remaining connected this summer and to working hard to make the 2021 Ohio State Fair the biggest and most exciting Fair in our state's history!

We wish you and yours the best of health and growth this summer and always. We look forward to seeing you, albeit virtually, in July and August. Again, we will be in touch very soon about opportunities for making music and inspiring our communities together this summer!

Warmest regards,



Jon C. Peterson, D.M.A.

Director

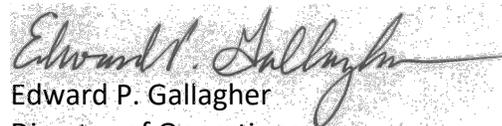
All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir



Brian W. Dodd

Director

All-Ohio State Fair Band



Edward P. Gallagher

Director of Operations

All-Ohio State Fair Band and Youth Choir